

Performance Evaluation & Research Division (PERD)

PERD's Objectives:

The legislative auditor commissioned a study to gauge the use, effectiveness, and benefits of telework as it was used by the West Virginia executive branch in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Key Recommendation:

The Legislature should consider formally authorizing telework to encourage its use where appropriate and beneficial; encourage the acquisition of needed technology to facilitate telework; develop objectives, goals, and guidelines; and stipulate reporting requirements on the status, progress, and identified cost savings of telework.

January 2022

Special Report:

West Virginia State Government's Experience with Telework During the Covid-19 Pandemic

Report Overview:

Many State Agencies Have Benefited from Telework and Plan to Utilize It Going Forward

What Did PERD Do?

- A few months after the governor's Stay-at-Home Executive Order was issued, PERD staff surveyed the 139 state agencies to gain an understanding on the transition to telework. One hundred twelve (112) agencies responded.
- Shortly after the governor's Return-to-Workplace directive was issued, PERD staff interviewed nine state agencies to obtain details on their telework experience as they returned to the workplace.

What Did PERD Find?

- Virtually all responding agencies (97%) used telework to some degree.
- Most state agencies (79%) did not have pre-COVID telework experience.
- Most responding agencies reported they were as effective or more effective under telework.
- Several agencies that were interviewed continue to allow telework after the Return-to-Workplace directive (see Table 10 below).
- Office space has been reduced at significant savings to the State (see Table 10).
- Telework lowers employees' commuting costs and increases leisure time.
- Telework reduces the number of passenger vehicles on the roads, lessens road deterioration, and lessens vehicle emissions.

Table 10
Current and Potential Office Space Reductions
Resulting from Telework

State Agencies that Were Interviewed for Their Telework Experience				
State Agencies	Approximate Number of Teleworking Employees	Office Space Reductions	Annual Cost Reductions	Potential for Office Space Reductions From Telework?
The State Tax Department	216	23,944	\$407,048	Yes
The Consolidated Public Retirement Board	30	3,000	\$32,850	No
WorkForce West Virginia	3	0	0	Yes
The Division of Labor	0	0	0	No
The Board of Risk and Insurance Management	25	0	0	Yes
The Attorney General's Office	0	0	0	No
The Real Estate Division	7	284	\$4,740	No
The State Treasurer's Office	55	0	0	Cost-avoidance
The Department of Environmental Protection	50	0	0	Yes
Totals	386	27,228	\$444,638	
Sources: The Real Estate Division, and PERD interviews of each agency.				